



Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame announces 2011 inductees

Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame celebrates its 20th anniversary

CHICAGO, IL -- Eleven individuals and four organizations will be inducted in November into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, the country's only known government-sponsored hall of fame that honors members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities.

The inductees were selected by a subcommittee composed of former inductees, which reviewed nominations submitted by members of the public. The names were released by the Hall of Fame Committee of the [Chicago Commission on Human Relations'](#) Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues, a municipal government agency, in conjunction with the recently formed § 501(c)(3) support organization, Friends of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

The chosen nominees will be inducted at the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame's annual ceremony, which will take place on the evening of Wednesday, November 9, at the [Chicago History Museum](#), 1601 N. Clark St., Chicago. The event will be free and open to the public.

"It makes us proud that, even 20 years after our first ceremony, there are still important figures from the past and a constantly growing list of current Chicagoans whose accomplishments and community contributions merit being honored by the Hall of Fame," said Lourdes Rodriguez, co-chairperson of the Hall of Fame Committee and of the Friends of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

"Though municipal budget problems have restricted government financial support for the Hall of Fame this year, we are grateful that individual Chicagoans have stepped forward to assist us, through Friends of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, in maintaining a needed and historically significant institution," said Gary Chichester, the other co-chairperson of the committee and of the Friends organization.

The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame was established in 1991 under the auspices of the Advisory Council, with support from the [Chicago Commission on Human Relations](#) and then-Mayor Richard M. Daley. Its purpose is to recognize the achievements of LGBT Chicagoans, their contributions to the development of the city, and the help they have received from others. In 2011, it marks its 20th anniversary, holds its 21st annual induction ceremony, and enjoys continuing status as an official recognition by city government of Chicago's LGBT residents and their allies.

Those inducted fall into one of three categories: Individual, Organization, or Friend of the Community. Nominees represent all of Chicago's sexual-minority communities, including LGBT Chicagoans, past, present, living, and dead, as well as those who have supported or assisted them.

The persons honored in 2011 are:

Individuals

Paul Adams (1954-2000), an early AIDS campaigner who helped form Chicago for AIDS Rights (CFAR) and turned his status as a Mr. Windy City contest winner into an effective activism vehicle. Other involvements included Open Hand Chicago, the Pink Angels anti-crime group, Chicago Anti-Bashing Network, and a press column.

Greg Cameron, 53, an arts administrator and fundraiser. He formerly served as deputy director and chief development officer at the [Museum of Contemporary Art](#), creating partnerships with LGBT groups. He has helped lead and fund several LGBT organizations and is now chief operating officer of broadcasters WTTW and WFMT.

Antonia "Tata" Flores (1958-2008), founder in 1987 of Chicago's Dykes on Bikes motorcycle contingent, which appears in parades as a symbol of lesbian visibility. She coordinated and hosted its activities for the rest of her life, ran lesbian-affirming nightclubs, and aided diverse community causes before her death of breast cancer.

Grant Lynn Ford, 72, a former Assemblies of God minister who became an LGBT press pioneer and a dynamic [Metropolitan Community Churches](#) pastor in the Chicago area and in Florida, where he now lives. He was founding publisher of GayLife in 1975 and ran for election as 44th Ward alderman in 1978.

Robert Garofalo, M.D., 45, a national expert on promoting the health of LGBT youth and of youth affected by HIV/AIDS. He was director of youth services and deputy director at Chicago's [Howard Brown Health Center](#) and now directs Children's Memorial Hospital's Gender, Sexuality and HIV Prevention Center.

Ted Grady, 42, co-owner of Chicago's J&L Catering, through which he has helped to underwrite and sponsor many nonprofit groups. He has also helped to lead and raise funds for such causes as [About Face Theatre](#), [Equality Illinois](#), and [Chicago House](#), and he works on global LGBT issues with Chicago's [Heartland Alliance](#).

Marcia Hill, 53, a participant, promoter, organizer, and official of LGBT sports teams and events for almost three decades. She was a chief force in growing the [Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association](#) from about 200 members in 1983 to almost 4,000 today. She was also active in helping Chicago to host the 2006 Gay Games.

Tony Jackson (1876-1921), a pioneer in early-20th-century popular music. He brought musical influences from his native New Orleans to Chicago, gained fame as a talented and colorful performer, mentored such jazz figures as Jelly Roll Morton, wrote the 1916 hit "Pretty Baby," and lived as an openly gay man when that was rare.

Owen Keehnen, 51, a writer, interviewer, editor, and activist. His articles have appeared in local and national LGBT newspapers and magazines, and his work includes short stories, novels, and historical essays. He has served on the board of Chicago's [Gerber/Hart Library](#), and a book of his interviews will appear this autumn.

Brett Shingledecker, 48, co-founder of People Like Us, which operated as Chicago's only exclusively gay and lesbian bookstore from 1988 to 1997. The store became not only a source of books for thousands of customers but also an LGBT community information center, and it donated gift certificates to numerous organizations.

Jon Simmons (1955-1994), a city government liaison to LGBT Chicagoans under three mayors. Before being appointed by Mayor Eugene Sawyer in 1988, he had been Joseph Holmes Dance Theatre's executive director and a freelance writer and researcher. He was found murdered in Beverly Hills, Calif., while on a 1994 vacation.

Organizations

Good Shepherd Parish [Metropolitan Community Church](#), the first Midwestern congregation of the LGBT-oriented Universal Fellowship of [Metropolitan Community Churches](#). Active for some 37 years, the Chicago congregation met for the last time in 2007 after serving thousands of persons who were seeking religious support.

Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles, the umbrella group for a succession of instrumental ensembles that began in 1979 with the Chicago Gay Pride Band. Today, its four major components are still helping to promote LGBT equality and social acceptance through music, frequently appearing in parades and concerts.

Friends of the Community

Jenner & Block LLP, a distinguished national law firm headquartered in Chicago, which often has represented LGBT individuals and organizations in successful precedent-setting cases, besides providing pro bono legal assistance to others and financially sponsoring LGBT charitable and community organization events.

The Night Ministry, a social service organization that is Chicago's leading provider of emergency housing for runaway and homeless youth, of whom LGBTQ youth constitute a disproportionate (20 to 40 percent) number. It also provides them with HIV testing, counseling, and referrals.